

PROVIDING FAMILY AS A MAIN AND FIRST ENVIRONMENT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN LITERATURE

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Abstract: The family as the primary and first environment for the development of children's literacy, but the role of the family is rarely explicit so that family members rarely focus on what it does. This article aims to raise awareness that the people closest to the child will determine literacy skills especially reading. This article is based on literature review that has been done by the author from various sources as a material to give explanation about empowering family to child literacy development. In addition, data is collected through interviews to parents who have given a role in developing children's literacy skills. The strategy to empower families in this article refers to Roskos, et al (2003) suggests 8 strategies that can be done in the school environment. But only 4 strategies are taken in this article because it is considered in accordance with the purpose and can be implemented in the home environment (1) rich teacher talk; (2) reading a story book; (3) alphabetical activity; (4) support the occurrence of reading.

Keywords: Providing Family, Literacy, Roskos et al (2003)

1. Introduction

The family is the most influential context for child development, so that families provide an important role and support the success of children's education (Jennifer Cun-Li Wu & Tung-Liang Chiang, 2014; Esther J. Calzada et al., 2014). Therefore, in this article what is meant by family is a nuclear family that generally lives in a house with children, namely mother, father and brother. Without realizing that people around children and doing regular interactions with children can provide learning and knowledge for children. Families who already have knowledge and experience earlier than children can provide simple knowledge about things that the child has not yet known. This is because children's education starts from the time the child is born for personal formation and the development of children's education (Ardita Ceka & Rabije Murati, 2016).

It is important for families to be directly involved in the development of children's education because it will have a positive impact. The things that can be done are exchanging information, participating in school activities, and supporting children to study at home (Johnetta W.M., Pamela S., & Chenyi Z., 2015). Parents can provide facilities at home to children as an effort to support the development of children's education. Educational support that can be done by families to children can be done by providing support for the development of children's literacy, especially reading. But the problem at this time, parents often hand over children's literacy learning to schools even though family literacy provides a very broad role for education (Patricia A.C., & Vicky Z.C., 2006). Family literacy is a concept that encompasses the ways people learn and use literacy in a home environment (McGee & Morrow, 2005 in Patricia A.C., & Vicky Z.C., 2006). Therefore, the development of children's literacy, especially reading, in addition to being a teacher's attention at school, it would be nice for parents to give full attention to children's development. Children undergo a lot of time at home compared to at school, so the use of time at home is expected to be used so that children can get useful learning for their development.

The main and first role of the family in this article is devoted to the development of children's literacy, namely the ability to read. This is because current children's literacy abilities can be predicted from reading skills (when entering elementary school) (Kymberly K.B., Daniel J.W., & Sally S.M., 2002). However, when entering elementary school children have different abilities, it is questionable from the role of parents to support the development of child literacy (Stephen R.B., Steven A.H., & Christopher J.L., 2002). This difference in ability affects how much ability a child has, so parents are important to play a role in the development of children's literacy, especially reading. Therefore, the purpose of this article is to raise awareness that the people closest to the child determine early childhood literacy abilities.

2. Literature Review

What is Literacy?

Literacy is defined as the ability to write, speak, hear, think, and read effectively. It is an important development step that allows children, adolescents, and adults to communicate clearly (Laura Bornfreund, 2012). Literacy means capacity, confidence and disposition to use language in all its forms. Literacy combines various modes of communication including music, movement, storytelling, visual arts, media and drama, as well as speaking, listening, seeing, reading and writing (Melinda Charlesworth, et al, 2015). The explanation explained that the child must have literacy skills to help him achieve academic achievement, so that the child will have the ability to continue to develop and excel.

People need strong literacy skills to participate constructively in a pluralistic society that faces complex domestic and global challenges. Furthermore, poor literacy skills in adults are associated with poor health and occupational statistics. When estimates show that a significant proportion of Australia's adult population is still struggling with reading and writing, there is a clear justification for continuing efforts to improve literacy education in schools. (Government of NSW, 2014) Konza in Queensland Government (2014) suggests that adopting a balanced approach to support children's language development and literacy learning involves the following six features:

- a. develop social relationships that utilize the strengths, interests, and initial knowledge of children
- b. focuses on socially appropriate communication in context (pragmatic language use)
- c. Promotes vocabulary development
- d. develop phonological awareness
- e. develop sound knowledge of alphabets and letters (phonics)
- f. provides a rich literacy environment where literacy is deliberately used and discussed.

This is the basis or reason for the importance of literacy for children. Literacy is always related to language and language is a major factor in communication so that humans are able to live life as social beings well. Therefore, children's literacy development must be supported early on.

Why is Reading?

Reading is an important skill that must be owned by children because it becomes the foundation for children's academic success and to reduce inequality for children who have not been able to read especially from poor families. (Naomi L.R., Christan G.C., & Sloan S, 2016). There is no reason to state that children from families cannot afford to be reasonable if they cannot read because they cannot provide more facilities for children. Not always children need expensive facilities to be able to read, but examples and guidance from parents can be a motivation for children to be able to read. Reading together and listening to reading children can help to help children develop children's literacy skills, so that children will read independently of themselves (National Center of Family Literacy, 2006).

Margaret Mooney (1990) in Barbara Honchel & Melisa Schulz (2012) children learn to read by seeing and hearing reading in their daily lives in the same way they learned to speak. Reading books aloud to children is a practice that is intended to have a positive influence on the development of various literacy skills, language development, and world knowledge (Kindle K.J, 2011). Reading is not prohibited for children, but the way it is done must be in accordance with the child's development, meaning that when learning to read children feel happy and do not feel bored. Then the process of reading can be done by children starting to recognize the form of letters and how to ring them. Like the things that have been explained above, the family can do it in various ways, one of which is to help children read aloud so that children can follow each form of letters and how to pronounce it. Reading is not seen from how many words are read, but seen from the quality of children's reading so that reading aloud can be done so that the family can help children build knowledge from the text they read one by asking questions.

How is Providing Family as a Main and First Environment for the Development of Children Literature?

Every parent wants their children to have good development in literacy and have the opportunity to observe the development of literacy (David K.D. & Jeanne DeTemple, 1998). Families always have the opportunity if they try to involve themselves and always want to provide the best for child development. Because family and education are inseparable things, where there are families, education will always be there (Syaiful Bahri D., 2014). Education will always be the main basis in the formation of families, especially mothers, fathers, and even an older sibling can provide education to their children or siblings.

Children do not get the initial literacy skills at school, but children get early literacy skills at home by doing regular interactions with family so that children will be able to talk to other people even in the world (Frank N., Caroline C., & Collette C., 2016). Therefore, parents are expected to be involved in learning children at home so that when they are at home the child feels learning (National Center of Family Literacy, 2006).

The role of parents is discussed by the famous psychologist, Professor Urie Bronfenbenner in Nina Sardjunani (2015) who stated in the ecology theory of child development. The theory states that the closest environment to a child includes activities and patterns I interact directly with children with their immediate environment, namely interaction with parents, siblings, siblings, school, peers, children's toys and relationships or interactions in the family child, this explanation in ecological theory is called micro system. However, in this micro system before children get to know school and others, the first is from birth to the present children interact with their parents. This is one of the

reasons for parents to give their role to the development of children's literacy. The relationship between parents and children does not occur in one direction but two directions, namely parents socializing with children, as well as children socializing with parents (John W. Santrock, 2007). The interaction between parents and children will facilitate in helping children develop their literacy skills, because of the communication that goes well.

Parents will help children to achieve abilities at a certain level, then parents will reduce helping children when children begin to be able to reach a certain level of ability until the child is able to do it independently (Beverly Otto, 2015). This was done by the participating speakers and tried to provide a review of their role as parents for children. Both of these parents are professors and have children aged six and seven, and are considered to know their role as parents and understand the theory. The interview was conducted to Mr. 'D' and Ms. 'S'.

The question posed to find out the war of parents in the development of child literacy is "parents have a primary and first role for child development, especially in the field of literacy, one of which is reading. Reading was taken because at this time the success of literacy was seen from the ability of children to read. What is your role in helping children to develop literacy skills? "

Sir 'D' answered to help develop children's literacy skills especially reading I tried by:

- a. Parents read books at home.
- b. Providing books for children, even though children do not like reading.
- c. Directing children's interest in reading by visiting and shopping for regular books in bookstores, for example Gramedia is comfortable.
- d. Always offering to buy a new book whose genre is preferred by children, it could be a series so that children are addicted to continue the next series.
- e. Frequently ask the contents of a book and discuss it with a child.
- f. Make sure if the child buys a book, then we show a happy and supportive attitude.

Mrs. S replied:

"My role is as a picture or role model and facilitator with consideration because reading is built as culture. As a figure, there needs to be concrete exposition habits by parents and families who love reading. as a facilitator I provide reading material according to children's development, interests and needs."

There are several efforts that can be done to help the development of child literacy. In this article will offer some efforts to support the development of child literacy according to Kathlee A. Roskos, James F. Christie, & Donald J. Richgels (2003) states that there are eight strategies that can be done to teach the essence of early lioterasi. However, in this article the author will only take five strategies that can be used also in the home environment, so that each strategy will be linked to its use in the home environment.

- a. Talking rich teacher

Talking about a rich teacher means that the teacher must use words that are rarely used so that the words used do not like to be done in the course of conversation in daily activities. The teacher in question is a parent as an adult who guides children in the home environment. For example, when in a normal conversation children like to ask about whether brushing teeth is important before going to bed? If not brushing your teeth, what causes will it cause? In daily activities, the family will answer that if they do not brush their teeth before going to bed, their teeth will get sick. But in this situation, the family can answer if they don't brush their teeth before going to bed then there will be germs or viruses that live in the teeth and teeth will become hollow. In the statement there are words of germs or viruses. The word must be foreign to the child, but with that word, the family can explain the germs or viruses simply so that the child will have a new vocabulary in his vocabulary. In addition, the teacher must be good at developing the sentences the child says into descriptive, and mature language. This means that when a child mentions something as he pleases, then the child must be taught to mention it in full and with a mature sentence. These activities can also be carried out at home. Example when a child buys a pencil for school but the child does not like it. The child said: "the pencil is bad". The word "pencil" is ugly is an immature sentence and seems unable to appreciate the gift from his parents. But in this process, children can be taught to make a more mature sentence, that is,

by saying, "I'm sorry I don't really like the pencil because the pencil I want is a picture of a barbie not a robot picture". With the use of mature sentences, the child will be accustomed to using vocabulary that will not offend others. After using rare vocabulary and developing children's sentences so that they become mature sentences, then discuss challenging content regarding knowledge about the world. In this activity the family can provide facilities to children in the form of maps or globe, encyclopedia book so parents can provide information about the world to children. Encyclopedia books can also support children's knowledge. The world also needs to be introduced by parents to children with various facilities or if facilities are limited, parents can tell what is known so that children will try to reason and imagine what is said by parents. The introduction of this world is indeed a rather difficult activity to do, because the provision of facilities to show that in addition to the places that are inhabited and stepped on at this time, there are still many countries that have not much different conditions that have residents, cities, tourist attractions and so on. Therefore, to show all of them to children, there are several facilities such as photos, videos and books about the world and everything in it. In addition, parents can introduce the language used in the world, one of which is English. With this introduction, children will understand that various countries are available and various languages are used. This will make the child think more deeply about the world. Lastly listen and what response your child will follow. Children usually always say whatever they want to say, sometimes as a family we assume that what the child says is one of the less important things. But it is different for children, everything the child says is important for children. Therefore do not equate adults with children, and respond as best as possible so that children feel cared for by their families. When the family does not listen to what the child says, the child usually seeks attention by slamming things, shouting, and so forth. To avoid this, the family should give a good response to the child. The response given by parents will make the child's feelings happy because the child feels cared for. Every question raised by a child, if answered properly then it can add to the child's insight in accordance with the stage of development.

b. Reading a story book

The activity of reading this storybook can also be done at home. Families can read a story or story to a child. Reading this story or fairy tale can be done not only once and again and again until the child knows the contents of the fairy tale and is accustomed to hearing the vocabulary. After that, the child is asked to retell what has been heard. Reading this storybook provides many benefits for children. Children learn about some fairy tales or legends so that children will add new vocabulary treasures. The addition of this new vocabulary can be used as a reference that through storytelling stories, children will feel happy to introduce more to children's literacy. This strategy is carried out to make children feel happy about some fairy tales or legends in gathering more and more child treasury. This strategy can be successful if parents can present and choose some interesting fairy tales according to the stage of child development. In line with the presentation (Simon, 2003; MacNaughton & Williams, 2004; Morrow, 2007; Otto, 2008) in Dondu Naslihan Bay & Ozlem Simsek Cetin (2014, p. 14) that reading storybooks provides many opportunities for children, and there is a strong relationship between reading story books and literacy skills that arise. Therefore, do not hesitate to provide facilities for children to develop children's literacy development.

c. Alphabet activity

This alphabet activity involves children in activities that involve alphabetical materials, for example. ABC books, magnetic letters, puzzles and alphabet blocks, and alphabet charts. In this alphabet activity both at school and at home can be done by providing some tools and materials that support the ability of the child's alphabet. First, the ABC book is a book that provides various letters of the alphabet from the letters a to z with the form of capital letters and lowercase letters, with the book the child becomes aware of the shape of each letter of the alphabet. Secondly, magnetic letters, namely an alphabet letter shape behind which there is a magnet so that children can stick to the magnetic letters on the wall or in the refrigerator. The use of magnetic letters can be done by attaching the letters of the alphabet and later can be arranged in accordance with the words mentioned by the family both father, mother and brother. Third, puzzles and alphabet blocks. Like magnetic letters, alphabet puzzles and blocks are a medium that can give children a sense of pleasure. Many puzzles that are currently sold in children's toys, so that the educational game media can be easily obtained in nearby stores, besides that, puzzles can also be obtained from carpets that are often used at home. Unwittingly the

carpet in the form of alphabet puzzles can have a good impact on the development of early childhood literacy. Therefore, tools that are often purchased at home can be chosen and sorted to support the development of child literacy. Fourth, the alphabet chart. This alphabet chart is a poster that can be pasted on the wall. So that when the child passes home twice and turns around, the child will see the alphabet chart installed. So that the child will remember what he saw. If the child asks his family, then don't be ignored. Answer the child's questions well because they can provide meaningful experiences for children in the process of developing children's literacy.

d. Supports the appearance of reading

Parents can support the emergence of children's reading by designing a house such as reading or library, the design used can be adjusted to the child's development so that the child can be interested in at least sitting in the reading area. If the size of the house is not large, the family can take advantage of the corner or a small part of the house as a place that can make the child interested even if just sitting, when the child is comfortable, parents provide books for children to hold and open, if this has made the child feel happy and accustomed so that over time the child will get used to so that the child's interest in literacy will begin to emerge. Raising a child's interest in literacy is not an easy thing, but there are several ways that can be done, namely the family can read books that the child wants to know if parents need to repeat the story so that the child will feel familiar with the words spoken by his family, and in the end the child will try to read for himself what he has heard. In addition, families can label objects in their homes, for example, chairs labeled with "SEAT" and others including all toys owned by children. So with the labeling, it is expected that the child will know the names of objects at home by recognizing the letters that have been attached. With this experience, it is expected that children will gain meaningful knowledge.

The presentation of the four methods above is expected to provide benefits so that parents can provide the best for their children.

3. Material & Methodology

The methodology used in this article is the literature review, which means that the writing in this article is written based on existing theories and then discussed to provide a solution in this article. In addition, to obtain data, the author conducted an interview with parents to state the main role and the first for the development of children's literacy.

4. Conclusion

The family is the first and foremost environment for the development of children's literacy skills, especially reading. The family becomes the first environment to accompany children from the womb until the child is born, and the family becomes the main supporter to always provide the best efforts for child development. So this article tries to provide solutions for families to help develop children's literacy skills, especially reading. The advantage of this article is that it provides knowledge to the family that as the closest person to the child, the family gives a big influence on the development of literacy of children especially reading. So this article is recommended for further research.

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